

THE CHILDREN'S LEAF

EDITED BY THE CLEVELAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

No. 8

LINCOLN BIRTHDAY NUMBER

JANUARY, 1909

O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN!

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,
The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won,
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring;
 • But O heart! heart! heart!
 O the bleeding drops of red,
 Where on the deck my Captain lies,
 Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills,
For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you the shores a-crowding,
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;
 Here, Captain! dear father!
 This arm beneath your head!
 It is some dream that on the deck,
 You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will,
The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and done,
From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won;
 Exult, O shores! and ring, O bells!
 But I with mournful tread,
 Walk the deck my Captain lies,
 Fallen cold and dead.

Walt Whitman

Reprinted from Leaves of Grass, by permission of D. Appleton and Company.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Oh, slow to smite and swift to spare,
Gentle and merciful and just!
Who in the fear of God, didst bear
 The sword of power, a nation's trust!
 * * * * *
Pure was thy life; its bloody close
Hath placed thee with the sons of light,
Among the noble host of those
 Who perished in the cause of Right.
 William Cullen Bryant

BATTLE-HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored,
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword;
 His truth is marching on.

I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps;
They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps,
I can read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps;
 His day is marching on.

* * * * *
He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;
He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment-seat:
Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer Him,—be jubilant, my feet!
 Our God is marching on.

Julia Ward Howe

HOW BEAUTIFUL TO SEE

How beautiful to see
Once more a shepherd of mankind indeed,
Who loved his charge, but never loved to lead;
One whose meek flock the people joyed to be,
 Not lured by any cheat of birth,
 But by his clear-grained human worth,
And brave old wisdom of sincerity!
 They knew that outward grace is dust;
 They could not choose but trust
In that sure-footed mind's unfaltering skill,
And supple-tempered will
That bent like perfect steel to spring again and thrust.
 * * * * *
The kindly-earnest, brave, foreseeing man,
Sagacious, patient, dreading praise, not blame,
 New birth of our new soil, the first American.

James Russell Lowell

From the Commemoration Ode. Copyright by Houghton Mifflin and Company.

A KING

We talked of kings, little Ned and I,
As we sat in the firelight's glow;
Of Alfred the Great, in days gone by,
And his kingdom of long ago.

Of Norman William, who, brave and stern,
His armies to victory led.
Then, after a pause: "At school we learn
Of another great man," said Ned.

"And this one was good to the oppressed,
He was gentle, and brave, and so
Wasn't he greater than all the rest?
'T was Abraham Lincoln, you know."

"Was Lincoln a king?" I asked him then,
And in waiting for his reply
A long procession of noble men
Seemed to pass in the firelight by.

When, "No," came slowly from little Ned,
And thoughtfully; then with a start,
"He wasn't a king—*outside*," he said,
"But I think he was in his heart."

Ella Matthews Bangs

From St. Nicholas. Copyright by The Century
Company.

PLEDGE TO THE DEAD

From the lily of love that uncloses
In the glow of a festival kiss,
On the wind that is heavy with roses,
And shrill with the bugles of bliss,
Let it float o'er the mystical ocean
That breaks on the kingdom of night—
Our oath of eternal devotion
To the heroes who died for the right!

If the wind that sighs over our prairies
No longer is solemn with knells,
But lovely with flowers and fairies,
And sweet with the calm Sabbath bells;
If virtue, in cottage and palace,
Leads love to the bridal of pride,
'T is because out of war's bitter chalice
Our heroes drank, deeply—and died.

Ah, grander in doom-stricken glory
Than the greatest that linger behind,
They shall live in perpetual story,
Who saved the last hope of mankind!
For their cause was the cause of the races
That languish in slavery's night;
And the death that was pale on their faces
Has filled the whole world with its light!

To the clouds and the mountains we
breathe it;
To the freedom of planet and star;
Let the tempests of ocean enwreath it;
Let the winds of the night bear it far,—
Our oath, that, till manhood shall perish,
And honor and virtue are sped,
We are true to the cause that they cherish,
And eternally true to the dead!

William Winter

Copyright by MacMillan and Company.

We know him now: all narrow jealousies
Are silent; and we see him as he moved,
How modest, kindly, all-accomplish'd, wise,
With what sublime repression of himself,
And in what limits, and how tenderly;
Not swaying to this faction or to that;
Not making his high place the lawless perch
Of wing'd ambitions, nor a vantage-ground
For pleasure; but thro' all this tract of
years
Wearing the white flower of a blameless
life.

Alfred Tennyson

From The Idylls of the King.

LINCOLN

And so he came,
From prairie cabin to the Capitol,
One fair ideal led our chieftain on,
Forevermore he burned to do his deed
With the fine stroke and gesture of a King.
He built the rail pile as he built the State,
Pouring his splendid strength through every
blow,
The conscience of him testing every stroke,
To make his deed the measure of a man.

So came the Captain with the mighty heart;
And when the step of earthquake shook
the house,
Wrenching the rafters from their ancient
hold,
He held the ridgepole up and spiked again
The rafters of the Home. He held his
place—
Held the long purpose like a growing tree—
Held on through blame and faltered not at
praise,
And when he fell in whirlwind, he went
down
As when a kingly cedar green with boughs
Goes down with a great shout upon the
hills.

Edwin Markham

From Lincoln and other poems. Copyright, 1901,
by Edwin Markham.

LINCOLN'S SAYINGS

All through life, be sure you put your feet in the right place, and then stand firm.

We will speak for freedom and against slavery, until everywhere in this wide land, the sun shall shine, and the rain shall fall, and the wind shall blow upon no man who goes forth to unrequited toil. From the Speech at Charleston, Ill., 1856.

I want it said of me by those who know me best, that I always plucked a thistle and planted a flower when I thought a flower would grow.

You may fool all of the people some of the time, and some of the people all of the time; but you cannot fool all the people all the time.

Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith let us, to the end, dare to do our duty as we understand it. From the Speech at Cooper Institute, N. Y., 1860.

Every man is said to have his peculiar ambition. Whether that be true or not, I can say, for one, that I have no other so great as that of being truly esteemed of my fellow-men, by rendering myself worthy of their esteem.

Don't swap horses crossing the stream.

I hold that if the Almighty had ever made a set of men that should do all the eating and none of the work, He would have made them with mouths only and no hands; and if He had ever made another class that He intended should do all the work and no eating, He would have made them with hands only and no mouths.

Lincoln asked of a regular army officer how it was that an amateur, like Garfield, should accomplish in two weeks what a trained officer would have wanted two months to effect.

"Because he was not educated at West Point," was the satirical reply. "No, that is not the reason. It is because when Garfield was a boy he had to work for a living."

Prayer and praise must go together.

Take all of this Book (the Bible) upon reason that you can, and the balance on faith, and you will live and die a happier and better man.

Truth is your truest friend, no matter what the circumstances are.

Now, boy, on your march, don't you go and forget the old maxim that 'one drop of honey catches more flies than a half-gallon of gall.' Load your musket with this maxim, and smoke it in your pipe.

LINCOLN'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I was born February 12, 1809, in Hardin County, Kentucky. My parents were both born in Virginia, of undistinguished families—second families, perhaps I should say. My mother who died in my tenth year, was of a family of the name of Hanks, some of whom now reside in Adams, and others in Macon County, Ill. My paternal grandfather, Abraham Lincoln, emigrated from Rockingham County, Virginia, to Kentucky about 1781 or 1782, where a year or two later he was killed by the Indians, not in battle, but by stealth, when he was laboring to open a farm in the forest. His ancestors, who were Quakers, went to Virginia from Berks County, Pennsylvania. An effort to identify them with the New England family of the same name ended in nothing more definite than a similarity of Christian names in both families, such as Enoch, Levi, Mordecai, Solomon, Abraham, and the like.

My father, at the death of his father, was but six years of age, and he grew up literally without education. He removed from Kentucky to what is now Spencer County, Indiana, in my eighth year. We reached our new home about the time the State came into the Union. It was a wild region, with many bears and other wild animals still in the woods. There I grew up. There were some schools, so called, but no qualification was ever required

of a teacher beyond "readin', writin', and cipherin'" to the rule of three. If a straggler supposed to understand Latin happened to sojourn in the neighborhood, he was looked upon as a wizard. There was absolutely nothing to excite ambition for education. Of course, when I came of age I did not know much. Still, somehow, I could read, write and cipher to the rule of three, but that was all. I have not been to school since. The little advance I now have upon this store of education, I have picked up from time to time under the pressure of necessity.

* * * * *

If any personal description of me is thought desirable, it may be said I am, in height, six feet four inches, nearly; lean in flesh, weighing on an average, one hundred and eighty pounds; dark complexion, with coarse black hair and gray eyes. No other marks or brands recollected.

Yours truly,

A. Lincoln

From The Life and Works of Lincoln. Copyright by the Current Literature Publishing Company.

Executive Mansion, Washington, November 21, 1864.

Mrs. Bixby, Boston, Massachusetts.

Dear Madam:—I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement of the Adjutant-General of Massachusetts that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save. I pray that our heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom.

Yours very sincerely and respectfully,

Abraham Lincoln

From The Life and Works of Lincoln. Copyright by the Current Literature Publishing Company.

A story is told of his interview with William Scott, a boy from a Vermont farm, who, after marching forty-eight hours without sleep, volunteered to stand guard for a sick comrade. Weariness overcame him, and he was found asleep at his post, within gunshot of the enemy. He was tried, and sentenced to be shot. Mr. Lincoln heard of the case, and went himself to the tent where young Scott was kept under guard. He talked to him kindly, asking about his home, his schoolmates, and particularly about his mother. The lad took her picture from his pocket, and showed it to him without speaking. Mr. Lincoln was much affected. As he rose to leave he laid his hand on the prisoner's shoulder. "My boy," he said, "you are not going to be shot tomorrow. I believe you when you tell me that you could not keep awake. I am going to trust you, and send you back to your regiment. Now I want to know what you intend to pay for all this?" The lad, overcome with gratitude, could hardly say a word, but crowding down his emotions, managed to say that he did not know. He and his people were poor, they would do what they could. There was his pay, and a little in the savings bank. They could borrow something by a mortgage on the farm. Perhaps his comrades would help. If Mr. Lincoln would wait until pay-day possibly they might get together five or six hundred dollars. Would that be enough? The kindly President shook his head. "My bill is a great deal more than that," he said. "It is a very large one. Your friends cannot pay it, nor your family, nor your farm. There is only one man in the world who can pay it, and his name is William Scott. If from this day he does his duty so that when he comes to die he can truly say 'I have kept the promise I gave the President. I have done my duty as a soldier,' then the debt will be paid." Young Scott went back to his regiment, and the debt was fully paid a few months later, for he fell in battle.

Helen Nicolay

From her Boy's Life of Abraham Lincoln. Copyright by The Century Company.